GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1361
ANSWERED ON:07.03.2008
CHILD MARRIAGES IN THE COUNTRY
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Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a recent study by the Centre for Social Research (CSR) has revealed high incidence of child marriages in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) the number of such incidents reported during the last three years;

(d) whether the Government has taken any steps to prevent such incidents; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY)

(a)&(b) As per information received from Centre for Social Research (CSR), a study has been conducted on 'Child Marriage in India: Situational Analysis in Three States'. Two selected districts only have been taken for the purpose of study in the States of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. High incidents of child marriage were found in these states but this cannot be generalized for the country. The sons were married off when they were less than 21 years (16.8%) and daughters married off when they were less than 18 years (30.4%) in Varanasi as compared to 4% and 6.4% in Meerut in Uttar Pradesh. 69.4% of boys and 66.7% of girls are getting married below the prescribed age for marriage in Tonk districts whereas 57.1% of boys and 47.7% in Jaipur in Rajasthan. It is 18.4% of boys and 16.8% of girls in Bhopal compared to 14.4% of boys and 6.4% of girls in Shajapur in Madhya Pradesh.

(c) As per the information received from National Crime Record Bureau, 97 cases in 2007, 99 cases in 2006 and 122 cases in 2005 were registered under Child Marriage Restraint Act in all over India.

(d)&(e) In order to prohibit child marriages and to make the provisions of the Act more effective and punishment more stringent for offenders, a new legislation "The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006" (No. 6 of 2007) was notified in the Gazette of India on 11th January, 2007 and the said Act has been enforced w.e.f. 1.11.2007. Also, awareness generation and advocacy measures are continuously being undertaken by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in this connection. The Ministry has formulated a new scheme called the Conditional Cash Transfer with Insurance cover for the survival of girl child provided the following conditionality are satisfied i.e. birth and registration of the girl child, full immunization, enrolment in school, retention in school and being unmarried at the age of 18 years.